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QUT's Centre for Inclusive Education (C4IE) produces research on matters that affect students in education with the aim of improving the educational experiences and outcomes of *all*, particularly those experiencing marginalisation. One of C4IE's objectives is to address knowledge gaps and positively influence attitudes by disseminating research evidence, engaging in public debate, and providing quality professional learning opportunities. C4IE makes this submission in response to the Pathways to Post-School Success, Review of Western Australian senior secondary pathways consultation.

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The Pathways to Post-School Success, Review of Western Australian senior secondary pathways consultation paper makes 35 draft recommendations against three distinct areas for change:

- Reframing the purposes of senior secondary education
- A system built from learning goals
- More fully recognising student diversity and achievement.

C4IE's response focuses on specific recommendations across these three areas.

**Recommendation 1. Western Australian Government to commit to developing a statement setting out the multiple inter-related purposes of senior secondary education, which centres on the concept of 'students' interests and aspirations'**

A statement of the multiple purposes of senior secondary education is a commendable recommendation. We note that the concept of 'students' interests and aspirations' is not defined in the recommendations of the *Expert Panel Report Consultation Draft* (Post-School Success Expert Panel, 2024). To ensure the statement's effectiveness and fidelity during implementation, the terms 'interests' and 'aspirations' require explicit definitions. Using the term 'student's interest' without a clear definition carries the risk of decisions being made in the perceived best interest of the student without considering the voice of students and their experiences and knowledge as necessarily valuable or essential within the process. A suggestion would be to consider incorporating elements of student voice in defining students' interests. Please see recommendations 2 & 5 in this submission for a more expansive discussion about voice-inclusive practice. In relation to aspirations, the *Expert Panel Report Consultation Draft* (Post-School Success Expert Panel, 2024) uses the term 'raise aspirations' (p. 29), a concept that has been problematised in much of the research focusing on aspirations of students from low SES backgrounds in Australia (Gore et al., 2015; Prieto et al., 2022). Much of the research on youth transitions and aspirations challenges long-held deficit views that students from equity cohorts have lower aspirations than students from a more privileged background. Many students from equity groups aspire to university and/or to pursue prestigious occupations. However, they have different levels of access to cultural and socioeconomic resources, making it more difficult for some groups to realise some aspirations. There is research evidence that postschool aspirations can be formed as early as eight or nine years of age but that these diminish over time (Berger et al., 2020; Gore et al., 2015), with

academic achievement and clear understanding of the links between qualifications and occupations being essential to support student aspirations. It is therefore critical that school staff, including principals, middle leaders, classroom teachers, and careers counsellors, to understand their role and how educator attitudes, curricular offerings, and within school practices like grouping and academic streaming, as well as socioeconomic and cultural factors can impact students' aspirations. For example, emerging research on the aspirations of students with disability also discusses the role of opportunities throughout schooling as a factor that supports aspirations of students with disability (Maia-Pike 2021, 2024). It is essential to remove barriers preventing students from accessing academic pathways within the school. Evidence shows that senior curriculum offerings in schools are linked to socioeconomic composition and location (Green et al., 2022; Perry & Southwell, 2014), reproducing inequitable education outcomes. Evidence also suggests that advice given to students during the Year 10 subject selection process can be influenced by staff views on gender, socioeconomic status and culture (Gowlett, 2012). Rather than receiving support to access the curriculum, students who are perceived as having lower ability are 'talked out' of academic subject selection and redirected to subjects or programs with credentials that have limited value once they finish school. These systemic and attitudinal barriers can prevent students from accessing the academic curriculum, creating further challenges for students in equity groups to realise their aspirations. Ensuring that students' aspirations are supported early on in school and reducing access barriers to pathways that are linked to student's aspirations will provide a meaningful senior certificate that is fit for purpose.

**Recommendation 2. School system, sectors, and SCSA to conduct an inclusive process to develop and refine a statement on the purposes of senior secondary education, drawing on consultation with students, schools, families, other education sector stakeholders, and industry**

We commend the recommendation of developing and refining the statement on the purpose of secondary education that draws on a process of consultation involving students and their families. The benefits of consultation with students in educational spaces have been well documented. Such a consultation process must enable students to voice their opinions and authentically listen to ensure that senior secondary education is relevant and meaningful to students. The consultation process must be credible to students and their families by ensuring they can voice their options without fear of repercussion. There should be a genuine interest in their perspectives, and their views should be discussed and actively acted upon (Rudduck & Fielding, 2006). In order to hear and respond to the voices of all students, including those from priority equity cohorts, democratic processes such as voice-inclusive practice are both inclusive and practically relevant (Gillett-Swan & Sargeant, 2018). Voice-inclusive practice provides a framework for initiating educational partnerships between adults and young people to enable student voice to be authentically and meaningfully embedded in educational system design and practice. By consulting students with disability about the purpose of senior secondary education, young people with diverse learning requirements can shape their education in a meaningful way. Critically, the process of student consultation must be accessible, meaning communication and structural barriers must be identified and removed (Tancredi, 2020).

**Recommendation 3. SCSA to incorporate the new statement of purposes as agreed above to guide its activities through its Strategic Plan. When the School Curriculum and Standards Authority Act 1997 is next reviewed, the Western Australian Government should ensure that it incorporates this statement of purposes into the legislation, along with any other changes required to allow SCSA to deliver on the recommendations contained in this report.**

We agree that this new statement of purpose should be incorporated into legislation as this gives it the strongest chance of being enacted in policy and practice.

**Recommendation 4. As part of its senior secondary syllabus review process, SCSA to commit to a course-by-course review of Year 11 and 12 courses and programs, to ensure that course rationale, aims, and design are consistent with the new statement of purposes of senior secondary education. SCSA to advise on: reasonable timeframes for this process to take place; priority courses for review; alignment with other activity; and how to engage with students in the review process.**

We agree and suggest that as part of the Year 11 and 12 review close consideration be given to the quality, parity of esteem, and transactional value of subjects to ensure that students are not simply being retained at school but that they are being exposed to knowledge that is valuable both to them now and into the future (Graham et al., 2015). There has long been valid criticism of vocational offerings, particularly those offered by outside training organisations (Clarke & Polesel, 2013). There is no point keeping young people at school if they are not going to learn something that will help them (i) make the transition into further education, training or work, (ii) contribute to a democratic society by understanding its processes, and (iii) participate in cultural and political life.

**Recommendation 5. Western Australian Government, through SCSA in partnership with the three school sectors, to review the role that young people play in education system design, including periodically consulting students on senior secondary course rationales, aims, and design.**

We commend this recommendation, which aligns with the human right to freedom of expression ‘in all matters affecting the child’ (Article 12, *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child*; United Nations, 1989). An important extension is to ensure that the right to expression is enacted through any means of communication, dependant on the child’s choice and preference (e.g., oral language, in writing, through art, technology, or other media; Article 13 *United Nations, 1989*). For children with disability, the right to be consulted on all matters, including education, is expressly protected under the *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* (United Nations, 2006). The *Disability Standards for Education 2005*, Australian federal legislation, obligate by law that education systems, leaders, and educators consult students with disability about the provision of reasonable adjustments. By involving students with disability in consultation about the design of education systems, secondary course rationales, and aims, young people with diverse learning requirements will have the opportunity to shape systems to better fit their needs. This proactive approach may also remove barriers to accessing curricular content, course selection, and pathway decisions, before they arise and restrict participation. Critically, the process of student consultation must be accessible, meaning communication and structural barriers must be identified and removed (Tancredi, 2020).

In order to hear and respond to the voices of all students, including those from priority equity

groups, democratic processes such as voice-inclusive practice are both inclusive and practically relevant (Gillett-Swan & Sargeant, 2018). Voice-inclusive practice provides a framework for initiating educational partnerships between adults and children/young people to enable student voice to be authentically and meaningfully embedded in educational system design and practice. In 2018, a research project was conducted in a secondary state school serving a disadvantaged community in Queensland, Australia. Voice-inclusive practice was used with students from Years 7-10 to guide school-based reform, with the aim of improving students' sense of school belonging and wellbeing (Gillett-Swan & Graham, 2017; Gillett-Swan et al., 2019; Gillett-Swan et al., 2024). The student population was diverse, with more than one third of students having a language background other than English and almost one in ten students were Indigenous. Separate student and staff surveys were used to investigate baseline wellbeing and student focus groups further explored emergent themes. Then, a staff working party was established for further exploration of identified issues. Concurrently, a multi-year-level student inquiry group was developed to take a deep dive into findings from the student survey and focus groups, which resulted in seven wellbeing inquiry project groups that focused on specific topics. Actionable strategies included school policy review, streamlining of processes, and inclusion of extra support, resources, and passion classes. The project also revealed disparities between students and staff perceptions on some themes, such as respect and recognition (where staff said students were being treated with respect more than students felt they were respected) and support provision (where staff had a higher opinion of the support available to students than students did). This study gives an example of how direct and meaningful consultation with students can contribute to school improvement (Gillett-Swan et al., 2024).

**Recommendation 6. Western Australian Government to commit to periodically evaluating the effectiveness of these recommendations on an agreed schedule. We suggest: 18 months following the Western Australian Government's response focussing on fidelity of implementation, and again three years later with a focus on achievement of new purposes and outcomes for students.**

We agree and suggest that the Western Australian government consider publishing the review outcomes. Transparency of progress is important for its ongoing achievement.

**Recommendation 7. Education sector organisations to work together to strengthen data collection and integration, particularly to enable understanding of school and post-school outcomes for all priority cohorts.**

We agree that a strengthened data collection and analysis approach is essential to evaluating whether these proposed reforms will succeed. The review has identified several limitations in the current data collection and management practices, particularly in relation to equity groups. Addressing these data collection and integration issues will reduce barriers to collaboration between education sector organisations and provide a more holistic understanding of student experience and progress through different stages of education.

**Recommendation 8. The Western Australian Government, on behalf of the three school sectors and SCSA, to assess resourcing implications of all recommendations in this report, in order for this package of recommendations to be fully funded.**



We agree with this recommendation. Funding demonstrates the commitment of government and can be leveraged to support the achievement of practice change.

**Recommendation 9. Department of Education and DTWD to work with the school system and sectors to strengthen delivery of career education and pathway planning, consistent with the principles outlined above in conjunction with appropriate course selection processes, where applicable, particularly for students in regional, remote, and lower socio-economic areas.**

The proposal to strengthen career education and pathway planning aligns closely with several key national initiatives and international research:

1. The National Career Education Strategy (2019).
2. Recommendations from the National Youth Inquiry into Employment and Transitions (2022).
3. Recommendations from the recently released Australian Universities Accord Final Report (2024).
4. International research emphasising the importance of career education (Percy & Hooley, 2023; Dodd & Hooley, 2021).

Based on these alignments, we endorse the following recommendations:

1. **Data Collection and Analysis:** Implement robust systems to gather and analyse relevant data on student career aspirations, outcomes, and program effectiveness.
2. **Professional Development:** Provide comprehensive training for educators to enhance their ability to deliver effective career guidance and to address unhelpful practices (e.g., streaming students out of key academic subjects to protect the school's ATAR).
3. **Tailored Career Resources and Advice:** Develop and distribute career education resources specifically designed to address the needs of students from equity cohorts within their local contexts.
4. **Evaluation of Career Education Programs:** Implement accountability measures to ensure the provision of up-to-date and student-centred career advice. These measures should include:
  - a. Ongoing and authentic consultations with students and their families
  - b. Opportunities for meaningful student participation in school decision-making processes, supporting self-determination and student voice
  - c. Student-focused career planning advice that prioritises students' interests beyond their school life
  - d. Development of partnerships between schools and external agencies/institutions to facilitate collaboration with students and families
5. **Early intervention:** Implement career awareness program starting from Year 8 to help students develop a broader understanding of career options and pathways.
6. **Culturally Responsive Career Education:** Ensure that career education programs are culturally sensitive and inclusive, addressing the specific needs and perspectives of Indigenous students, culturally and linguistically diverse students, and other underrepresented groups.
7. **Parent and Guardian Engagement:** Develop strategies to involve parents and guardians in the career education process, recognising their significant influence on students' career decisions.
8. **Skills-based Focus:** Emphasise the development of transferable skills (such as critical

thinking, communication, and adaptability) alongside traditional career guidance to prepare students for the rapidly changing job market.

By implementing these recommendations, we aim to create a more responsive, inclusive, and effective career education system that better prepares all students for their future pathways.

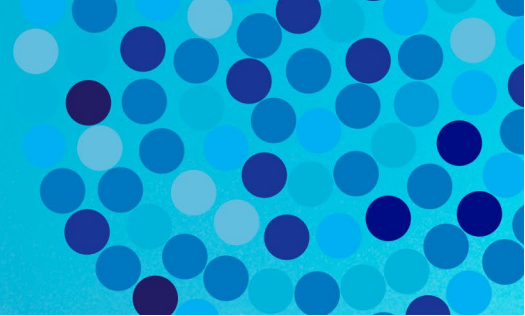
**Recommendation 10. Department of Education and DTWD to hold first principles discussions with key stakeholders, which includes SCSA, schools, the system and sectors, training providers and employers, on the purposes of VET in schools, including for the purposes of student retention and engagement, with a view to establishing a shared understanding. This should be seen as a precondition to addressing issues relating to delivery of VET in schools or assessing the suitability of particular offerings. This process should draw on SCSA's work undertaken as part of its WACE refreshment process.**

We agree that VET offerings delivered in schools need to align more closely with post-school training options and industry needs, so we commend this consultation process. We add that the quality of these programs must also be independently assessed. Though VET in schools has positively impacted student retention toward senior years of schooling, a commissioned report by the Australian government found that outcomes are not currently measured (Joyce, 2019). There are concerns that these programs are not adequately preparing students for employment or providing theoretical content equivalent to senior certificate subjects (Polesel et al., 2020). Hence, VET in schools needs to provide outcomes that have direct links to skills, knowledge and qualifications required in the job market and/or academic pathways, focusing on students from equity cohorts and its provision needs to be rigorously assessed.

We add that students must also be included in this consultation process. This submission has previously discussed the benefits of consulting with students, including the need for voice-inclusive practice (Gillett-Swan & Sargeant, 2018). Considering that VET in schools is overrepresented by students from low-SES and disadvantaged backgrounds (Clarke & Polesel, 2013; Fogarty et al., 2023), it will be instrumental that students from all equity cohorts are involved in the consultation process.

**Recommendation 11. Western Australia to shift to an approach in which, for any particular course or program, learning goals, rather than course category, should define course design and assessment requirements. This should draw on SCSA's recent and ongoing syllabus review and development work.**

We commend the focus on learning goals and the accompanying recognition of the impact of assessment on student choices—and of course on teacher practice and school-based policies that support students to make choices in Senior. The proposed focus on learning goals has the potential to 'put assessment in its place' as a necessary part of the pathway process. Student outcomes need to be measured in valid and reliable ways, and assessment will be used for credentials and selection purposes, but these should not overshadow the highest purposes of assessment: to promote learning. It would be heartening to think that this reorientation to course design assessment requirements will be connected with some critical attention to the form and weighing of external examinations. It would be easy for leaders in some subjects to claim that external examinations should continue to dominate on the grounds that they are high-status subjects where students are on a pathway to highly competitive university courses.



Much harder would be to build a case that such an approach is justified because it demonstrably contributes to better learning outcomes and improved accessibility to important knowledge.

**Recommendation 12. Western Australian senior secondary course and program assessment should draw from a wide range of contemporary assessment tools. SCSA should determine the utility and reliability of different methods of assessment where necessary to ensure that current standards are maintained, drawing on its recent and ongoing syllabus review and development work.**

The possibilities for leveraging the affordances of a portfolio system, guided by the principle of fullest and latest (or continuous improvement) instead of equally weighted pieces, are significant. They are also in keeping with the obviously sincere intent of these recommendations overall, to embrace the universities accord vision of what's needed to secure an equitable range of high-quality pathways through and from senior secondary schooling. Portfolios and learner portfolios, used system-wide, may help guide this process.

**Recommendation 13. As part of the course-by-course review in Recommendation 4 above, SCSA to consolidate existing offerings where it makes sense to do so based on learning goals, drawing on its current WACE refreshment process.**

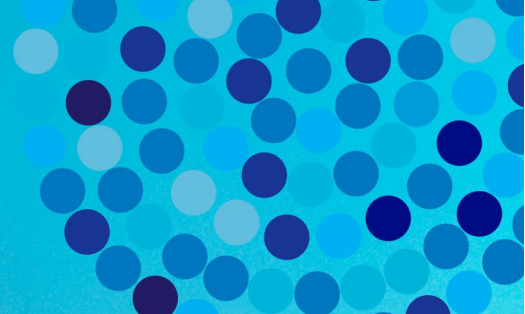
We agree that consolidation is an important part of reform and support this recommendation. We suggest that the government consider the accessibility of subject offerings as part of this process because more students can participate and achieve in 'regular' subjects than is perceived, if those subjects are taught using [Accessible Assessment and Accessible Pedagogies](#). Reducing the number of differentiated offerings in senior years is important nationally to ensure that students in equity groups are not being provided lower-order content. If taught accessibly, using contemporary texts and methods, high value knowledge can be equitably shared. Obviously not all students need or want to engage with quadratic equations or Shakespearean text, and we are not suggesting they be forced to. What we are suggesting is first that we reconsider what the base level of knowledge should be and ensure that all students are exposed to it. Essentially, consideration needs to be given to the purpose of assessment, as well as the purpose of school. For if the purpose of school is to develop critical, confident, creative and caring adults who can participate in cultural, social and economic activity and live a life they have reason to value (which we think it is), then our curriculum and assessment should be driven with this aim. University selection has dominated school education for too long.

**Recommendation 14. Once courses have been reviewed, SCSA to cease using the terminology of 'ATAR' and 'General' courses, to reflect the move away from the hard distinction between the two course categories. This should draw on the SCSA's work undertaken as part of its current WACE refreshment process.**

We agree and commend this recommendation.

**Recommendation 15. Ensure that median ATAR is not used as a measure of school performance, including removing it from the school dashboard used in Department of Education schools.**

We commend this recommendation. There is criticism about ATAR's limitation in providing a holistic picture of student performance (Pilcher & Torii, 2018). Hence, removing median ATAR



from the dashboard used in the Department of Education can potentially reduce pressures around school performance based on ATAR as an indicator of student achievement. There is evidence that these standardised measures have the potential to narrow approaches to teaching and learning (Pilcher & Torii, 2018) and have an impact on students' sense of belonging and own academic capability (Burke et al., 2016). Additionally, there is some criticism that these types of performance indicators contribute to educational disadvantage (Boyle & Anderson, 2020) and might create perverse incentives for schools to engage in more diverging practices—by redirecting students who may be perceived as having lower abilities to non-ATAR pathways.

**Recommendation 19. SCSA and TISC to work to expand the types of courses and programs that can contribute to an ATAR, with a view to expanding what students are able to have recognised through an ATAR.**

We recommend caution here. Taking the Queensland VET offerings as an example, it is entirely possible for a student to 'earn' a Diploma of Business but to learn absolutely nothing in the process. This simply kicks the can down the road. Students can get into university degrees which is great, but they often can't survive once there because the quality of the VET offering is so poor. See recommendation 10.

**Recommendation 20. SCSA to commit to working with DTWD and TISC to enable as many VET qualifications as possible to contribute to the combined score from which an ATAR is calculated; and to implement this change as quickly as possible, drawing on SCSA's current WACE refreshment process.**

See Recommendation 19.

**Recommendation 21. Universities to strengthen collection and analysis of data on students that accessed universities through enabling programs, to contribute to the evidence base on the effectiveness of these programs and how universities can support students that elect to use these pathways.**

We support the recommendation that universities strengthen the collection and analysis of data on students that accessed universities through enabling programs. This data should be used to identify specific challenges faced by students from enabling programs to better inform the design of enabling programs and support services. These data should also be used to inform and update career practitioners to enhance the provision of career counselling services for future students considering similar pathways.

**Recommendation 25. SCSA to make WASSAs available to students who leave school prior to the completion of Year 12, in order for all students to leave school with a record of achievement.**

We strongly endorse the recommendation to make Western Australian Statements of Student Achievement (WASSAs) available to students who leave school prior to completing Year 12. This is a critically important recommendation for several reasons:

1. **Employment Opportunities:** Many employers rely on these statements as evidence of a student's achievements and skills. Denying early leavers this document potentially hinders their job prospects and fails to recognise the comprehensive set of learnings, skills and experiences acquired through their learning journey to date.
2. **Recognition of Achievement:** It acknowledges and validates the educational progress and personal growth students have made, regardless of when they exit the school system.



3. **Motivation for Further Learning:** Providing a tangible record of achievement could encourage students to pursue further education or training, and to see their existing accomplishments as a foundation to build upon.
4. **Mental Well-being:** Leaving school without formal recognition of achievements may negatively impact a young person's self-esteem and mental well-being. A WASSA could provide a sense of accomplishment and closure.
5. **Equity in Transition:** Providing all students with a WASSA ensures that all students, regardless of when they leave school, have a standardised document to present to potential employers or educational institutions, creating a more level playing field. Documentation providing evidence of student learning and achievement can reduce student burden and confusion when navigating between educational institutions and the labour market.
6. **Comprehensive Representation:** This practice would provide a more accurate and fair representation of a student's educational journey, capturing achievements that might otherwise go unrecognised.

Implementing this recommendation would be a significant step towards more inclusive and supportive educational practices, recognising that educational pathways are diverse and that all learning and achievement deserve acknowledgment.

**Recommendation 28. School system and sectors to review reasonable adjustments in the context of senior secondary pathways, to identify opportunities to strengthen inclusive practices.**

We strongly support the review of reasonable adjustments in senior secondary pathways to strengthen inclusive practices. In today's rapidly changing environment, students face an increasingly diverse array of challenges, both academic and personal. It is crucial that our education system recognises and accommodate these challenges, ensuring every student has an equitable opportunity to succeed. While maintaining academic integrity, flexible, responsive pathways that address the unique needs of each learner are needed. This approach should prioritise individual consideration rather than relying on a one-size-fits-all checklist, acknowledging the vast diversity of student experiences and requirements. Although time-intensive, this personalised approach is essential to truly maximise the potential of all students, regardless of their individual circumstances or barriers they may face.

Adherence to the *Disability Standards for Education 2005* (Cth) are an obligation of school systems, educators, and support staff across all levels of education, including senior secondary. Therefore, while the integrity of assessment and examination processes must be upheld, students with disability are entitled under national legislation to receive reasonable adjustments that ensure barriers to access and participation are removed, so they can participate on the same basis as a student who does not have a disability. Upholding the obligation to provide reasonable adjustments requires education systems, leaders, and teachers to reject assumptions that adjustments provide an 'unfair advantage', when they do not (Cumming et al., 2013).

Note, however, that reasonable adjustments are often retrospective and require students to be identified in order to receive them. Many students, particularly those with disabilities impacting language and information processing (e.g., Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder,

Developmental Language Disorder, autism) remain unidentified and therefore do not receive adjustments. Consultation is also required to ensure relevance and effectiveness of adjustments, as per the DSE, however, this is commonly not enacted, especially in Senior where students are provided with generic adjustments like extra time in exams. Again, only students who are identified receive these adjustments, but they are next to useless if time is not the barrier. We recommend that the government implement inclusive education with a key focus on Accessible Assessment and Accessible Pedagogies (Graham & Willis, 2025, forthcoming) as these approaches have been demonstrated to improve access, engagement, and achievement for all students, whether they have a disability or not (Graham et al., 2018; Tancredi et al., 2024; Willis et al., 2023).

**Recommendation 29. SCSA to undertake a review of special consideration arrangements, especially in context of new modes of assessment, with a view to expanding schools' capacity to validate arrangements that are supportive of learners with disability, chronic conditions, or additional learning needs. For clarity, this should include what opportunities there are for schools to make decisions around special considerations (for example, with regard to timing; rest breaks etc). This should build on SCSA's Equitable Access to Assessment Policy and Guidelines noting that SCSA has recently undertaken reviews of special considerations for students which have informed this Policy and Guidelines.**

We commend SCSA for their commitment to reviewing the special considerations arrangements, to support school teams to have the knowledge and capability to design universally accessible assessment. We further commend the indication that school-based decision making for students' special provisions are under consideration. SCSA are further commended for the principles that underpin the Equitable Access to Assessment Policy and Guidelines.

Research conducted within the [Accessible Assessment ARC Linkage project](#) has demonstrated that re-designing assessment task sheets, Accessible Pedagogies, and Accessible Assessment for Learning practices have positive impacts for students (Graham et al., 2018; Graham & Willis, 2025, forthcoming; Tancredi et al., 2024; Willis et al., 2023). If implemented with fidelity, these practices reduce the need for adjustments for a range of students, however, there will be students for whom inclusive universal provision will not be enough. In these cases, adjustments are required, however, we note some concerns with the recommendation as it stands.

Adjacent to Recommendation 29, we note that the current Equitable Access to Assessment Policy and Guidelines stipulate that:

The Authority requires a diagnosis of a learning disorder that uses the DSM V criteria. These criteria specify that specific learning disorders with impairment in reading (including dyslexia), and/or impairment in written expression and/or impairment in mathematics (dyscalculia) are diagnosed through a clinical review of an individual's developmental, mental, educational, and family history, reports of test scores, teacher observations and response to academic intervention. A psychologist with expertise in the assessment of specific learning disorders is best placed to undertake this assessment.

(Government of Western Australia School Curriculum and Standards Authority, p 4).

This requirement signals a significant deviation from the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*, where the definition of disability does not require a clinical diagnosis, but instead may be:

‘a disorder or malfunction that results in the person learning differently from a person without the disorder or malfunction’ and may be ‘imputed to a person’. (Cth, Section 4)

Therefore, in reviewing the special considerations arrangements, the requirement for diagnosis as per the current Equitable Access to Assessment Policy and Guidelines also requires review. This is also not consistent with NCCD and the approach to needs-based funding that has been undertaken in several states to align with NCCD. We suggest that the government look closely at this recommendation to ensure compliance. There is no difference in secondary or senior years of schooling; students with disability are entitled to the same adjustments as they are at all other levels of education.

**Recommendation 31. SCSA to explore the possibility of developing a new offering for students with disability, similar to the New South Wales Life Skills course.**

While we acknowledge the potential benefits of developing a new offering for students with disability, similar to the New South Wales Life Skills course, we emphasise the importance of ensuring that such a course:

1. Is presented as an option rather than a default pathway, ensuring students are not pressured or automatically directed into this course solely based on their disability status.
2. Focuses on developing real-world, transferable skills that enhance students' employability in the evolving job market. The curriculum should be designed with input from industry partners to ensure its relevance to current and future workforce needs.
3. Does not replicate offerings that students can access outside of school. The rich curriculum experiences that school education affords and the educational entitlement to this curriculum must be upheld for all students. Therefore, where alternate offerings that extend beyond the core curriculum are available, there should instead be considered.
4. Empowers students by fostering their agency and decision-making abilities. The course should equip students with the tools and confidence to make informed, personally meaningful career choices.
5. Incorporates flexibility to accommodate the diverse needs and aspirations of students with disability, recognising that this is not a homogeneous group.
6. Includes regular reviews and updates to remain aligned with best practices in inclusive education and the changing landscape of work.
7. Provides clear pathways for further education, training, or employment, ensuring the course serves as a stepping stone.
8. Incorporates strong connections with potential employers and post-school support services to facilitate successful transitions.

By adhering to these principles, such a course can truly enhance the career prospects and personal development of students with disability, rather than limiting their options or perpetuating stereotypes. The goal should be to create an empowering educational experience that opens doors and expands possibilities for all students.

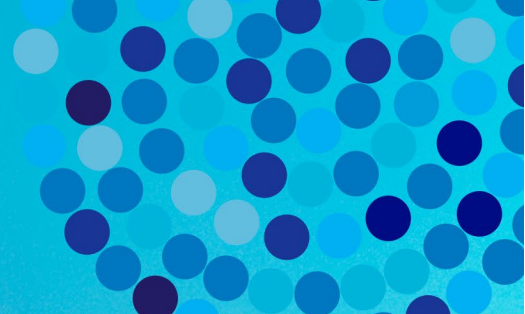
**Recommendation 32. SCSA to develop an additional level within the WACE to accommodate students with a recognised disability, following a period of consultation with students with disability, their families, schools, and other stakeholders. This should draw on SCSA’s work undertaken as part of its current WACE refreshment process, and which reflects similar offerings in other jurisdictions.**

A new course offering for students with disability, providing an alternative certification pathway is by definition, not an ‘inclusive alternative’ as suggested in the Expert Panel Report Consultation Draft (Post-School Success Expert Panel, 2024, p. 50). We agree with stakeholders who support students with disability and were consulted on this recommendation. This separate certificate is not desirable and should be rejected. Separate arrangements are incompatible with Australia’s obligations under the *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability* (United Nations, 2006). Note that the Queensland Department of Education has been successfully moving students with disability into the QCE instead of the QCIA with now very limited numbers of students completing QCIA. It will, hopefully, be phased out and WA should avoid instituting such a pathway.

**Recommendation 33. The literacy and numeracy standard remain as a requirement to achieve the WACE.**

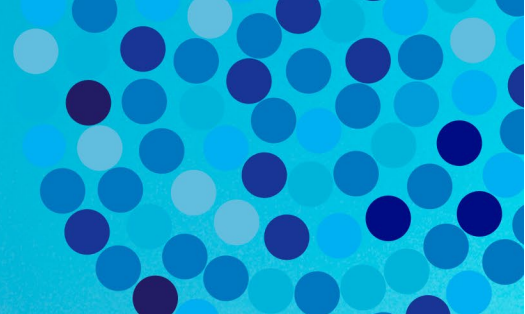
We agree that the literacy and numeracy standard should remain as a requirement of the WACE and acknowledge the disproportionate impact of a literacy and numeracy requirement on students from equity cohorts. Importantly, where students have not developed adequate literacy and numeracy skills across their schooling years, the reason for this must be identified and remediated. This is particularly so if sub-optimal teaching practice has contributed to students’ under-developed literacy and/or numeracy skills.





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